Mitchell Sees Students' Support a Liability for Candidates

Washington —(UPI)— Mass participation by students in this Fall's election could create a backlash that would hurt the candidates they support, Attorney General John N. Mitchell said yesterday.

"If all those kids come off the campuses and campaign for Candidate X, it might urge people to vote for the other candidate," Mitchell told reporters at a luncheon in his office.

Mitchell said most Americans are fed up with demonstrations and picketing and that this would be reflected in the Nov. 3 general election.

'Just Identification'

A reporter told Mitchell he doubted students working for candidates in the election would resort to demonstrations or picket lines.

Mitchell answered that there did not need to be a strategy of demonstrating or picketing for the possible backlash to come into play—"just an identification" with students who had participated in such activities.

Noting that such a backlash could hurt either Republican or Democratic candidates, Mitchell said, "there will be a lot more crossover voting than ever before."

"Hard hats in the construction industry who have been solid in the Democratic camp are certainly taking new looks, for example," Mitchell said.

"I believe a reaction will exist among the voters that is shown in the (public opinion) polls," Mitchell said. "People are opposed to demonstrators and picketing."

Lindsay vs. Hardhats

Mitchell added that he doubted that Republican mayor John Lindsay of New York City would get many "hardhat" votes, even if he ran as a Democrat.

Mitchell predicted that "this is going to be a unique election."

"There's going to be a great number of changes between Aug. 19 and Nov. 3," he said. ". . . the actions of Congress will have a great deal to do with it."

On Tuesday, the Senate completed a Congressional override of President Nixon's veto of a $4.4 billion aid to education bill in what is expected to become one of the major issues in the Fall—government spending and how it affects inflation.

The Fall issues, Mitchell said, will include the economy, the continued withdrawal of troops from Vietnam, "the general attitude of the public," and "feelings the general public has for demonstrators of one type or another."